

3 June 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. John F. Halsey, Staff Director  
Joint Committee on Printing

SUBJECT : Purchase of Printing Equipment

1. In response to your telephone call, I am happy to provide a summary of the circumstances leading to our recent purchase of an automatic plate processing machine for use in the Agency's printing plant.

2. As mentioned to you, we have been considering the purchase of this equipment for more than a year. We are called upon to do quite a lot of high-quality halftone and color work in our plant and, consequently, were motivated to seek the equipment available which is most suited for our production. With this in mind, we took particular pains to evaluate the processors demonstrated at "Print 68" in Chicago last June. Following our findings there, we visited commercial and Government plants in this area which were using processors manufactured by Durolith Corporation, Lithoplate, Inc. (Stark) and Western Litho Plate and Supply Company in order to evaluate these makes in production situations and to obtain comments from printers who use them. After consideration of the characteristics of the various makes, cost and user comments, we determined that the Western Model No. 36 was best suited to our requirements. Some of the factors leading to this conclusion are:

a. The size is best suited to our plant, as it will take 40" wide plates of any length. Our largest press is 40"x48".

b. A built-in dryer eliminates the final hand drying required with other processors.

c. The recirculation system for chemicals is preferable to the agitation system used by other firms.

d. Machine can be cleaned by one man by a flushing procedure in 15 minutes, whereas daily cleaning of other makes takes two men as long as 45 minutes for proper maintenance.

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e. The plate transport mechanism is, in our judgment, superior to that of other makes for the type of work we have.

f. Pressurized chemical feeding represents an improvement over the gravity or hand feeding of other makes.

3. Our order for the Western processor was placed with the National Plate Graining Company on 5 May 1969, and we expect delivery on it some time this month. The price we were quoted for the machine, installed in our plant, with a one-year guarantee covering parts and labor, was \$9,000. While the informal quotation for one of the other makes was somewhat less, the equipment we are getting is most suited for our work and well worth the difference in our judgment.

4. If I can be of any further assistance in regard to this matter, please let me know.



Chief  
Printing Services Division

cc: OLC

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